

VZCZCXRO3922  
RR RUEHAG RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLZ RUEHROV  
DE RUEHUP #0723 2050733  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 230733Z JUL 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3203  
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS BUDAPEST 000723

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

DEAPRTMENT FOR EUR/NCE

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CU](#) [HU](#) [EUN](#)  
SUBJECT: HUNGARY'S CUBA POLICY

REF: SECSTATE 74378

¶1. (SBU) MFA Americas Department Head Szilveszter Bus discussed reftel with PolOff on July 22. Bus commented that the recently updated EU Common Position opens a new chapter in EU/Cuba relations. While Hungary supported the lifting of sanctions - stating that the embargo was/is not successful - Bus stressed that "it is important to have review mechanisms as well as dialogue with pressure." He views "new" freedoms to have cell phones, or visit seaside beach resorts, as "something going on in the country, but not real reform." Bus said that Hungary will remain as active in Cuba as in the past, "working behind the scenes in Havana within the context of the Trans-Atlantic relationship while facilitating unity with the EU."

¶2. (SBU) Bus noted that their Ambassador and DCM in Havana regularly invite opposition leaders to their residences for meetings. He commented that the Embassy outreach program to the opposition includes distribution of DVDs and cameras, as well as plans for a fall film festival focusing on the Hungarian transition to democracy. Queried as to any pushback from the Cuban Government on relations with the opposition, Bus stated that their quiet diplomacy keeps doors open to the Cuban Government, "a much more effective approach than the shouting of the Czechs, who don't have any dialogue with the Cubans."

¶3. (SBU) Within the EU framework, Bus noted that Hungary worked hard on the final EU Common Position text, in particular, to soften the "the Council is encouraged" language desired by Spain to the more nuanced the "Council notes the changes." In closing, Bus said the MFA looks forward to continued cooperation with the U.S. in moving the Cuban democracy agenda forward.  
Foley